

PDC Technical Assistance Grant Minimum Standards

While we wish to maintain as much flexibility for Technical Assistance grants to Planning District Commissions as possible so that projects can be tailored to meet local needs, to provide more standardized project results and facilitate reporting to NOAA, however, it is necessary to apply minimum standards for these grants. The overall mission of the technical assistance grants is to advance coastal management at the local level and PDC efforts to meet this objective should still be closely tied to the ten goals contained in Executive Order 23. The three minimum standards below are intended to correspond to many of the activities currently undertaken by PDCs. Grant proposals should not be limited to these standards, but should contain products that demonstrate that the standards have been met.

If you have any questions, please call you Virginia CZM Program Project Manager for further explanation.

Coordination. Sharing information on coastal management issues is a key component of the technical assistance efforts of planning district commissions. This may include sharing information among local governments within the PDC, or between local governments and state or federal agencies. PDCs should, at a minimum, hold quarterly meetings of local government representatives directly involved in the management of coastal resources. The Products submitted to evidence this coordination should focus on the **outcome** of such meetings (e.g. position papers or talking points submitted on behalf of localities, or meeting summaries provided to localities etc.).

There are essentially 2 aspects to this requirement 1) holding, at a minimum, quarterly meetings with your local government staff and 2) the way coordination is reported to the Virginia CZM Program.

Many of you are already hosting regular meetings with your localities, but for those of you who are not, we would like this to be included as a part of your technical assistance program. These quarterly meetings should be designed to do several things: provide information to your localities about state/federal initiatives, solicit input from each locality on state/federal initiatives and to allow the exchange of information between localities. Agenda items should be determined by the PDC and these meetings can also be the forum used to offer the "Training" discussed below.

The effects of coordination are difficult to quantify and to evidence. However, we all need to begin to think along these lines. For example, what benefit came from attending this meeting? What is my role on this committee and how does that benefit my localities or the Virginia CZM Program? The deliverables for this aspect of technical assistance should focus on the outcome of attending such meetings or serving on these committees. For example, if you attend Tributary Strategy meetings, what materials have you prepared to present at the meeting (e.g. position papers written on behalf of your localities on the Strategy), and what follow-up did you do (e.g. prepared a summary of the impact of the Strategy for your member localities). In this example, these position papers and summaries would be your grant deliverable, not the agenda from the Tributary Strategy meeting.

Training. PDCs are in an excellent position to provide regularly scheduled training on coastal resource management issues to local government representatives. At a minimum, PDCs should provide four training opportunities during a grant year. Training should relate to one or more of the Virginia CZM Program goals and could be provided as a portion of the quarterly local government meetings (e.g. a presentation from a particular state agency), or through separate workshops or meetings. Training could be provided by state agency staff, PDC staff, academic or other experts involved in the selected topic. Virginia CZM Program staff will provide a list of potential training opportunities to select from, or PDC staff may arrange other related training that better fits local needs and interests.

As stated above, in many cases this training can be accomplished as a part of the quarterly meetings. Topics should be related to the Virginia CZM Program, our initiatives and the efforts of our partner agencies. Some examples may include:

- CB NERRs talking about what training is available*
- CBLAD providing a detailed discussion of the Buffer Management Guidance*
- A presentation (by VIMS or Virginia CZM Program staff) on the value of Dunes and current issues regarding protection*
- MP PDC presenting information on the Dragon Run SAMP to your localities*

These are just a few examples; please contact your Virginia CZM Program Project manager to discuss options.

Issue Analysis / Special Projects. In order to provide a more uniform standard for reporting, each PDC should undertake at least one project during the grant year that helps advance one or more of the coastal resource management goals in Executive Order 23. Projects should involve analysis of a coastal resource management issue that is important to the region or to a particular locality. Projects should also involve coordination with appropriate stakeholders and result in a product (report, map, brochure, etc.) that can be included as a deliverable.

In addition to the day-to-day technical assistance provided by the PDC, the PDCs are in a unique position to identify upcoming issues of regional significance. This minimum standard is included so that each PDC identifies one topic/issue of concern and addresses it through background research, problem identification, analysis and recommendations for future improvement. The topics should be related to the Virginia CZM Program's 10 goals. Some examples of past projects completed include:

-The NN PDC looked into the septic pumpout infrastructure in the region to discuss how to implement the 5-year pumpout requirement of the Bay Act. First septic systems were mapped from VDH records and a forum for discussion with the state agencies, local governments and septic haulers was provided to discuss options.

-The MP PDC identified public access as a significant issue in the region and created (through legislation) the Middle Peninsula Public Access Authority. To support the Authority, the MP PDC through its technical assistance program inventoried all the VDOT road endings in the MP as potential public access sites and is now working to secure ownership of those road endings.

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-The NRVC is working on a multimedia strategy to educate homeowners about Nonpoint Source Pollution. The strategy identifies the dominant issues (pet waste and lawn fertilizer), lays out media options (print, radio, TV) and potential messages for the region.

Again, these are just a few of the issues that PDCs have addressed in past TA grants. The project or issue identified should reflect both local need and should be designed in a way to enhance management of the issue moving toward better coastal management in your region.